

It is a disservice to consumers to deregulate the public airwaves as a means to allow greater oligopoly concentrations than already exist. Deregulation and competition are not synonymous. Anyone familiar with the recent history of deregulation of the airline industry, gas and oil, and public utilities knows that in an environment free from government regulation the strong gobble up the weak or else create an environment that drives smaller concerns into mergers. The public airwaves must not be monopolized by five or six media conglomerates that strangle free speech and public access to the news. The deafening silence from the major network news departments about your plans to deregulate ownership is damning evidence of the threat to the public interest. The public airwaves do not belong to the oligopolies. Any action to concentrate ownership of the public airwaves, broadband, or any other means of public information is an attack on freedom of speech and the public's right to know. The FCC is charged by law to protect the public's interest, not the media oligopolies. Stand up for the citizens of the United States, not the selfish interest of the conglomerates.